Doubling of Lucknow-Varanasi rail track

†2486. SHRI GANDHI AZAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of the work of the doubling of the Lucknow-Varanasi rail line;

(b) whether it is a fact that this work is lagging too much behind the schedule, and the contractor levelling the ground, left the place without completing the work;

(c) by when this work is likely to be completed;

(d) whether there is any proposal for electrification of this route also; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) Doubling of Lucknow-Varanasi section has been taken up in phases. Doubling of Utratia-Chandruauli (28 km.), Sultanpur-Bandhuakalan (9 km.) and Zafrabad-Srikrishna Nagar (34 km.) sections has been taken up where earthwork, bridge works etc. are in various stages of progress.

(b) and (c) No target date has yet been fixed for completion of doubling of all the sanctioned patches. Due to slow progress of work on Utratia-Chandrauli and sultanpur-Bandhuakalan sections, five contracts had been terminated; out of which two contracts have already been awarded and the remaining tenders are also under process. The work would be completed in the coming years as per availability of resources.

(d) and (e) Electrification of Varanasi-Zafrabad is a part of Mughalsarai-Zafrabad electrification project which has been included in the budget with the proviso that the work would be taken up after obtaining necessary clearances, action for which has been initiated.

Ticketless rail passengers

†2487. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.